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Few of us are destined to remain unforgettable after we depart in spirit from this earthly sphere. Daisy Swert, who died several weeks ago at the age of 94, qualifies as one of the exceptions.

First and last, among those of the Roman Catholic faith she will be remembered as St. Paul's faithful organist for 61 years. Daisy, a native New Bernian, was only 11 when she took over the little pump organ at the church that would be her house of worship for a lifetime.

Reaching those pedals must have been a real challenge for a youngster as short as she was, but it didn't intimidate her. Then, and in later years when a more modern musical instrument replaced the wheezy pumper, she didn't let her diminutive size hamper her at the console.

Her dependability and devotion for so long a span didn't escape the notice of Pope Pius XII, and in 1948 he conferred his apostolic blessing upon her. Retirement as St. Paul's organist terminated one phase of Miss Daisy's activity, but she continued to work in the Auditor's office at Craven County Courthouse until she was past 80.

Age didn't concern Daisy greatly. Until her final illness diminished the durable vivaciousness that was part and parcel of her personality, she maintained a youthful outlook on life. She fitted in well with each younger generation, and refused to agree that youth was worse behaved than the boys and girls she grew up with.

Musicians are usually regarded as temperamental, and it's easy to cite cases, but Miss Daisy had an even disposition. An early riser, she bounced out of bed as cheerfully as a robin greeting the dawn, and kept this attitude all day long. Rarely did she display her Swert temper, but when she did blow her stack it was no trivial tempest.

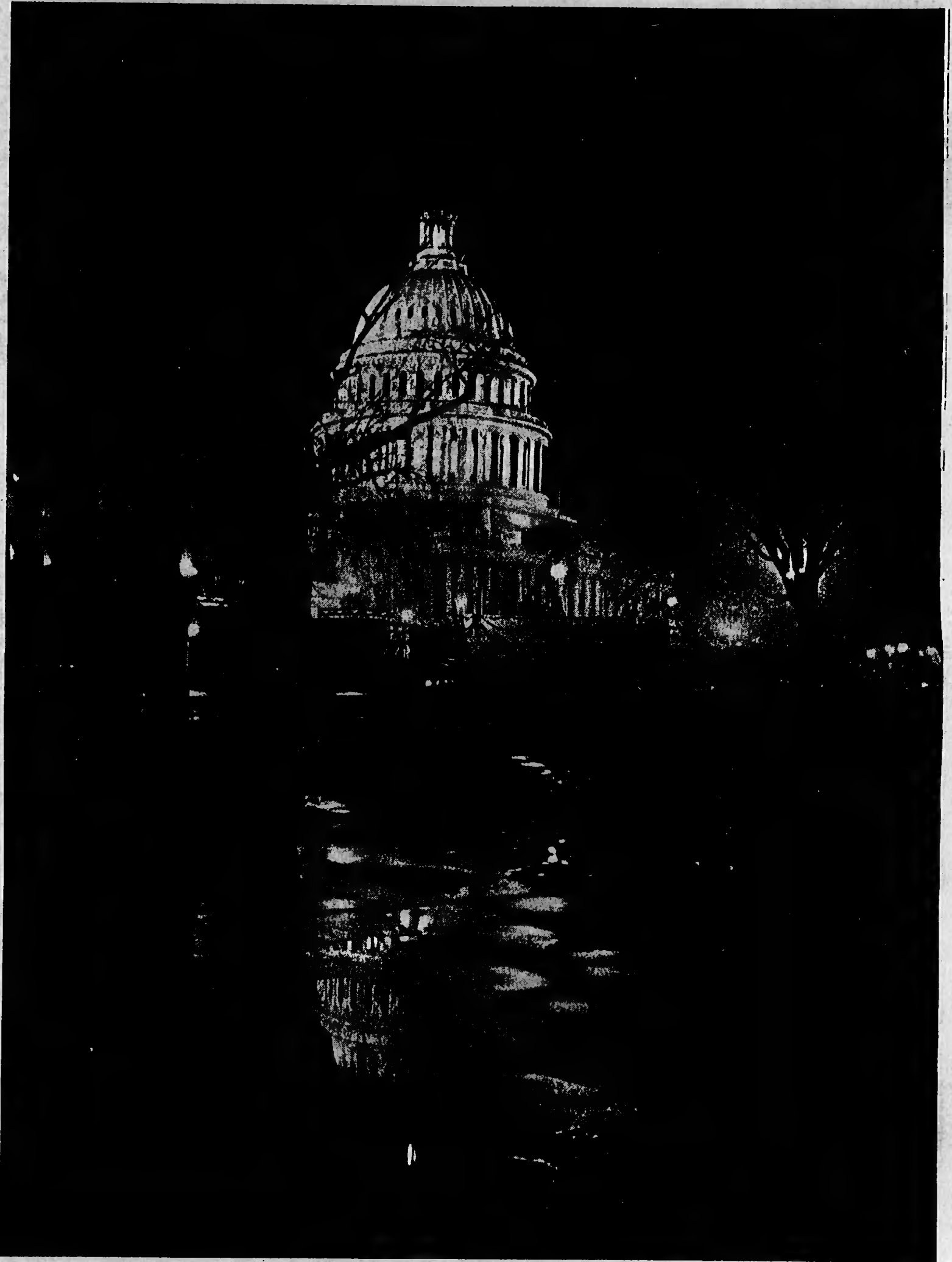
Miss Daisy didn't confine her nimble fingers to playing the organ and her office work for County Auditor Ben O. Jones. Before and after so called retirement, she delighted in sewing, embroidering and crocheting. Her bedspreads and table mats were lovely creations perfected with the same exactness she demanded of herself in other lines of endeavor.

She liked to read, kept abreast of current events, and measured by any standard could be termed a highly intelligent woman. She stayed young because she thought young, and the fact that birthdays fell lightly upon her shoulders was not an accident but a logical result of her wholesome philosophy.

Daisy was the last of the Swerts, and with the possible exception of Fred, the most unique member of an unusual brood that included five more brothers, and sisters, Bernard, Charlie, Joe, Mamie and Anne. Some of the children were born in New Bern, the others moved here with their parents from Pennsylvania.

Bernie Swert, the German born father, established a butcher shop in the city's downtown business section, and old timers will remember the sign

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The heavens weep
And almost seem to say,
"Where is the leader
That we need today?
Gone are the great
To their eternal home
Who gave a nation vision
Beneath this stately dome."
The somber, shadowed trees
Come forth with no reply,
And there is only silence
As tears fall from the sky.
—JGMCD.